A full-page photograph of a man with sunglasses and a blue jacket sitting on the hood of a silver car. Behind him is a large black steam locomotive with the number 131 on its front. The scene is outdoors on a railway track.

Two years ago, when Robert Zemeckis and Bob Gale were writing the script for *Back To The Future II*, it became clear they had a giant problem on their hands. It was obvious they had far too much material to try and fit into the framework of a two hour movie.

Feeling that their story would suffer if they tried to cut out some of the action, they made a good news/bad news call on the executives at Universal Pictures. "The bad news," they explained, "is that we can't make *Back To The Future II* for the summer of 1989. The good news is that we'll have *Part II* for Thanksgiving of '89 and *Back To The Future III* for the summer of 1990.

... and
now for
the good
news

"At first, when we made that call, they thought we were kidding." They weren't. Though shocked at the thought of giving birth to twin sequels to be made back to back, the executives were nonetheless overjoyed and gave the projects their approval.

According to plan, *Back To The Future Part II* came cinemas late last year and *Back To The Future Part III* has made its debut this month.

Though a fan of the western genre, director Bob Zemeckis is emphatic that the reason for setting *Back To The Future Part III* in 1885 was not simply his excuse to "bring back the western". "In fact it isn't a western," said the director. "It's a film about time travel. We're taking a 1980's kid whose sole knowledge of the west is based on what he's seen on television in Clint Eastwood movies, and actually sticking him in the 1880's, which brings an entirely new dimension to the genre. Given what we've done in the first two films, this was the only logical place the trilogy could go."

And what about the the puzzling jigsaw pieces left at the end of *Part II*, like, what happens to the hoverboard? "We knew we were taking a risk in leaving some questions unanswered, but everything is totally wrapped up in *Part III*. When you hook all three



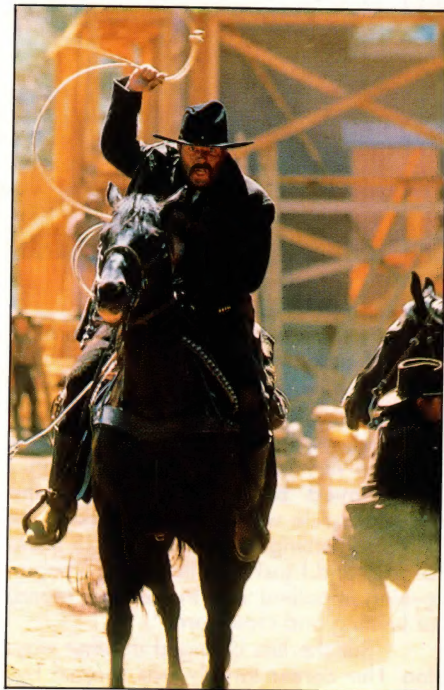
Left: Doc (Christopher Lloyd) with Clara Clayton (Mary Steenburgen), a widow in the shanty town of Hill Valley circa 1885 who captures the time-traveller's heart and interferes with the events in the space-time continuum.

Below: The Notting Hill(Valley)billies or perhaps The Travelling McFlyburies?

Bottom: Gunslinger McFly

Opposite page: Director Robert Zemeckis with the time-travelling DeLorean and Engine Number 3.

The steam locomotive, which was built in 1897 for the Prescott & Arizona Central Railroad, is a film star in its own right, having appeared on screen in *High Noon*, *Tales Of Wells Fargo* and *Petticoat Junction* and numerous other Hollywood productions. It was called back into service again for this film. For a pivotal piece of the action, it gives the DeLorean a push to get it up to the requisite 88 miles per hour necessary for time travel.



movies together, they work as a complete trilogy.

So will there be a *Back To The Future Part IV*. "No," said producer Bob Gale firmly. "I think it's about time we gave the McFly's and Doc Brown a little privacy. For all of their odysseys through time, our characters learn a very simple lesson, and it's Doc who sums it all up for us. 'You are in charge of your own destiny. The future is what you make of it. So go out and make a good one ...' " ☆